Respect for Life

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(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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ASHRAM ACTIVITIES

(*By M. K. Gandhi*)

III

Dairy

The Ashram ideal is to do without milk, as it holds that the milk of animals like meat is no food for mankind. For a year and more no milk or *ghi* was used in the Ashram, but as the health of the children as well as the adults suffered under this regime, first *ghi* and then milk had to be added to the Ashram dietary. And when this was done, it was clear that we must keep cattle in the Ashram.

The Ashram believes in *goraksha* (cow protection) as a religious duty. But the word *goraksha* savours of pride. Man is incompetent to 'protect' animals, being himself in need of protection from God who is the protector of all life. The word *goraksha* was therefore replaced by *goseva* (cow service). But as the experiment of doing without milk or *ghi* and thus serving the cow without any selfish considerations did not succeed, cattle were kept in the Ashram. We had buffaloes as well as cows and bullocks at first, as we had not yet realized that it was our duty to keep cows and bullocks only to the exclusion of the buffalo.

But it became clear day by day that cow service alone at present stands for the service of all sub-human life. It is the first step beyond which we have not the resources to go for the time being. Again cow slaughter is very often the cause of Hindu-Muslim tension. The Ashram believes that it is not the duty of a Hindu, nor has he the right, to take away a Muslim's cow by force. There is no service to or protection of the cow in trying to save her by force; on the other hand it only expedites slaughter. Hindus can save the cow and her progeny only by doing their duty to her and thus making her slaughter a costly act which no one can afford to do. Hindu society is not discharging this duty at present. The cow suffers from neglect. The buffalo gives more and richer milk than the cow, and keeping a buffalo costs less than keeping a cow. Again if the buffalo brings forth a bull calf, people do not care what becomes of him because buffalo 'protection' or 'service' is not a religious duty for them. Hindu society has thus been short-sighted, cowardly, ignorant and selfish enough to neglect the cow and has installed the buffalo in her place, injuring both of them in the process. The buffalo's interest is not served by our keeping her, but is in her freedom. To keep the buffalo means torturing its bull calf to death. This is not the case in all the provinces, but as the buffalo bull is useless for agricultural purposes in Gujarat for instance, it is doomed to a premature death.

On account of these considerations, buffaloes were disposed of and the Ashram now insists on keeping cows and bullocks only. Improvement of breed, increasing the quantity and enriching the quality of milk by giving various feeds, the art of preserving milk and extracting butter from it more easily, least painful methods of castrating bull calves, — all these things are attended to. It is all in an experimental stage, but the Ashram does believe that the cow would pay for its keep if she is well treated and all her products are fully utilized.

Many perhaps are not aware that a man cannot simply afford to keep a cow, and slaughter is inevitable so long as that is the case. Mankind is not so benevolent that it will die to save the cow or allow it to live on itself as a parasite. The cattle population at present is so large that if it is well fed, the human population will not have enough food left for itself. We must therefore prove the proposition that the cow if well kept is capable of greater production.

If this proposition is to be proved, Hindu society must discard some superstitions masquerading as religion. Hindus do not utilize the bones etc. of dead cows; they do not care what becomes of cattle when they are dead. Instead of looking upon the occupation of a tanner as sacred, they think it unclean. Emaciated cattle are exported to and slaughtered in Australia where their bones are converted into manure, their flesh into meat extract and their hides into boots and shoes. The meat extract, the manure and the shoes are then re-exported to India and used without any compunction.

This stupidity makes for the destruction of the cow, and puts the country to huge economic losses. This is not religion but the very negation of it. Tanning has therefore been introduced into the Ashram. None of us is still a skilled tanner. No tanner from outside who would keep the Ashram rules has been available. But all the same tanning is an integral part of Ashram

industry, and we have every hope that it will be developed and propagated like spinning. The cow will cease to be a burden to the country only if dead cattle are fully utilized. Even then there will not be any profits. Religion is never opposed to economics, but it is always ranged in opposition to profits. If the cow is to pay for its keep, dead cattle should not be allowed to go to waste or to swell the profits of large-scale tanneries. This cannot be done by force. But Hindu society should keep the cow, treat her and her progeny well so long as they are alive, cherish them in their old age, and fully utilize their carcases when they are dead. Thus alone can the cow be saved, and in saving her we shall perhaps learn how to save the rest of the sub-human creation. Thanks to our ignorance, laziness and hatred, the cow today is hastening to her destruction. As for the other cattle, the less said about them, the better.

The Ashram suggests that all *goshalas* and *panjrapoles* should be organized religiously and scientifically. The rich should have their own *goshalas* and insist on using cow's milk and *ghi* only. Trading in cow's milk should be looked upon as a sin, and the well-to-do should manage public *goshalas* so as to make both ends meet. The cow would then soon be saved.

The Ashram at present has a limited object in view; to conduct a model *goshala* at the Ashram, to breed good cows and bullocks, to utilize their carcases fully when they are dead so as to show that cow-keeping is an economic proposition, to train workers and provide for their employment upon the completion of their training. This work is going on at present. There are many difficulties, but we are fully confident of success.

(*To be continued*)

(*Translated from Gujarati by V. G. D.*)

SOAP FROM NON-EDIBLE OILS

The emphasis on the prevalent shortage of edible oils cannot be exaggerated. The findings of the Nutrition Advisory Committee make a dismal reading inasmuch as the consumption per capita of fat per day in India is hardly 0.6 oz., whereas it ought to be at least 2 oz., if the health of the nation is to be preserved or rather improved.

Among the industries that draw upon the existing sources of edible oils, the soap industry can be classed as a prominent one. Since however, the amount of soap consumed by a nation is a measure of its civilization, we cannot even so much as pretend to do without the soap industry but on the other hand, it actually requires to be encouraged and largely developed.

To meet although partially, the exigencies of such a situation, the utilization of non-edible oils in place of the edible ones, in the washing-soap industry, strongly suggests itself. The most common among the non-edible variety of oils, which can be employed to replace at least a part of the edible oils that now go to supply the soap industry, are what are locally known as *karanja* oil (*Pongamia Glabra*), *neem* oil (*Azadiraclata Indica*) and *undi* oil (*Callophyllum Inophyllum*). These oils are available in many parts of India and are now being used either for burning or wasted, and they are cheaper in those areas where the seeds are grown and crushed than the oils like those of groundnut, cocoanut, seasame, etc.

The greatest difficulty that confronts the common soap-maker in the preparation of soap from these oils by the semi-boiled process, is that these oils are highly susceptible to temperature and heat, which have to be carefully manipulated in the process (semi-boiled) of manufacture of soap from these oils. The average soap-maker who is conversant with the semi-boiled process of washing-soap manufacture can easily do this with a slight practice and succeed in producing washing soaps of good quality, containing non-edible oils like those of *neem* and *karanja* to the extent of 50 per cent of the total oil, and indicating the presence of 68 to 70 per cent of fatty acid, which amply speaks for the quality of the soap.

A successful *modus operandi* for the utilization of non-edible oils in soap manufacture largely depends upon two factors, the temperature control within 50° to 55° C and the duration of heat so as to avoid graining and induce saponification, till the complete formation of a perfect emulsion of soap. This can be accomplished by constructing a double-jacketed parabolic soap-boiling pan with empty space to contain water to serve the purpose of a water bath, whereby the temperature can be efficiently controlled while the attendant gradual cooling of the mass helps to accelerate the reaction in the pan.

The natural colour and the strongly disagreeable odour of the soap prepared from these oils (*neem*, *karanja*, and *undi*) are properties not easy to tame. This is really a formidable difficulty that has to be reckoned with. The nearest approach to satisfactory results in this direction can be made by using colours like Rhodamine and Congo red in the minutest quantities possible and perfumes like *yara yara*, pine oil, diphenyl oxide citronella, etc. in sufficient quantities.

It is very much desirable to encourage the utilization of non-edible oils like those of *neem*, *undi*, *karanja*, etc. and relieve the strain on the edible-oils shortage. The introduction by the manufacturers of these oils to the soap industry, and the liberal consumption of the soaps prepared from these oils by the consuming public, would not only be a patriotic duty, but also a useful innovation.

CHEMIST-IN-CHARGE,
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COUNTERFEIT GHEE AND GANDHIJI

During the last session of the Bombay Legislative Assembly, Shri Fulsinh Dabhi brought a private Bill for preventing hydrogenation of edible oils. The Bill was ultimately withdrawn on the Government giving an assurance that it would take steps to put a colour into the oils to distinguish it from *ghee*. It is proposed to colour it with *haldi*, as no more satisfactory colouring material is still available. I hope the assurance will be soon put into effect. I must not conceal my doubts about its fulfilment, because other Governments made similar promises but they still remain unfulfilled. Powerful interests have been working against such steps, and Governments seem unable to resist their pressure. Besides, the Governments themselves seem to be lukewarm in the matter, and there is perhaps not unanimity of opinion in their cabinets. From the press reports it appears that when Shri Dabhi's Bill was being discussed, it was opposed by only two parties, namely, a representative of the industry and the Bombay Government in the person of its Health Minister, Dr. M. D. D. Gilder. Dr. Gilder is himself a great medical authority and his own assurance that solidified oil is not less beneficial to health than the same oil in liquid form would have been regarded as sufficient by most people. But unfortunately somehow Gandhiji's name came to be mentioned in the discussion. The reference was reported in some of the papers in a manner which suggested (i) that Gandhiji himself also made use of the solid oil in the Aga Khan Camp in his food, and (ii) that he was not opposed to the hydrogenation of the oil. I enquired of Dr. Gilder if the report was correct. He has sent me a copy of his speech. The reference is as follows:

> "Sir, the name of Gandhiji has been flaunted in this discussion. I lived with him in jail in Aga Khan's Palace. Gandhiji himself had his food boiled. He never used fried food. He used butter made from goat's milk as he always used goat's milk, but the rest of us were mostly fed on vegetable *ghee*.
>
> Shri J. H. Shamsuddin: To his knowledge?
>
> Dr. M. D. D. Gilder: Yes, to his knowledge."

There is nothing to be shocked at in this. Any of his co-prisoners could as well have said that they took tea also in the Aga Khan Camp with Gandhiji's knowledge and without any protest from him. If Gandhiji had been younger in age, they would have even found some day Gandhiji actually preparing food for them with *vanaspati*, even as he is known to have prepared tea for Mahadevbhai Desai. Moreover, he was not incapable of experimenting with *vanaspati* even upon his own body. All this does not mean that he approved of the use of *vanaspati* any more than of tea.

As to (ii), we have Gandhiji's own writings written after his release from the Aga Khan Camp. They are reproduced in a booklet (*Nakali Ghee*), published by the Go-seva Sangh, Wardha, and may be had on application to it. I shall give only two important sentences:

> "*Vanaspati* is wholly superfluous. Oils may be refined of injurious property, but they do not need to be solidified nor they may be made to look like *ghee*. An honest manufacturer will not stoop to counterfeits. The market is flooded with them. Counterfeit coins are heavily punishable. Why not counterfeit *ghee*, since the genuine article is much more precious than coins?" (*Harijan*, 14-4-'46).
>
> "To sell vegetable oil or butter in the form and name of *ghee* is to deceive the Indian public. It is thoroughly dishonest. It is the clear duty of tradesmen not to sell any product of this nature in the guise of *ghee* and no Government should countenance such sale." (*Harijan*, 13-10-'46).

The question of the effect of the counterfeit *ghee* on health has its own importance, but it is secondary to the moral issue. The people have a right to demand that however harmless the counterfeit *ghee* may be, it must be visibly distinguishable from the genuine *ghee* and unmiscible with it. It is sought to be evaded by irrelevant and frequently changing opinions of health experts, supported by irrelevant certificates of Food and Health and other ministers, that they themselves have used the counterfeit *ghee* and found it harmless. I call the certificates irrelevant, because along with this artificial substance, they consume so many other articles of diet which could counter-balance its evil effects. With the best milk (and, perhaps fresh butter, eggs and meat), fresh vegetables and other substances with rich vitamin contents liberally available to them, if ministers have not experienced any harmful effect of the little *vanaspati* that they might use in frying their vegetables, it is no proof of the harmlessness of the product. To them, *vanaspati* is a luxury. To the ordinary lower middle-class vegetarian, *ghee* is the only source of animal fat. In the hope of getting it, he pays a high price for a product which is but a counterfeit. With all deference to the Doctor Minister of Bombay, I must decline to accept his personal testimony as sufficient. So, too, I agree, are the contrary opinions of those who have never used it irrelevant, however great their position might be in public opinion.

The case against this industry is based on grounds of business morals, and the harm caused by it to milch-cattle, village industries and health of the people. At its best, the testimony on the last point is negative. No expert has yet asserted that the counterfeit *ghee* is superior to genuine *ghee* or unhydrogenated oil.

I hope the Government of Bombay will prove strong enough, as promised, to take effective measures against this substance so "that it is not adulterated nor used for adulteration."

Wardha, 16-5-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

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RESPECT FOR LIFE

Of late sabotages on railway lines have become almost a regular event in our country. Very serious accidents of a major nature are deliberately brought about causing death and injury to numberless innocent persons. A single accident of the type of the late Calcutta-Punjab mail near Patna means a loss of public and private property worth *lakhs* of rupees immediately; and there is no means of knowing how much irreparable loss and hardships one such accident causes to individuals in money, anxiety, lifelong maimedness, permanent mental derangement, loss of a sole bread-winner etc.

Someone is reported to have said that there is less violence in the use of the atom-bomb against an enemy than in such lawless activities. I shall not hazard a measurement of degrees of violence involved in the two. This much is certain that there is not less wickedness of heart involved in the sabotage activity than in atom-bombing, even though the extent of destruction caused by the former is trivial in comparison with that caused by the latter. The common feature in both the acts is that man has lost all sense of respect for life. Both also indicate the denial of the principle that all property is a sacred trust, and may not be wantonly destroyed or endangered whoever may be in possession of it.

This is a common feature also of the ideologies of the Communists and Communalists of India and Pakistan and of the Democratic and Communist States of the modern world. Every one of them, one might almost say man in general, has lost respect for life, and every one has developed for wealth and means of production of wealth that type of jealous passion which sometimes leads rival lovers to murder both the beloved woman and the other lover. If in the midst of all ideological differences, there were in common a sense of respect for life, even jealousy for property and power would not lead to war, riot, sabotage, scorched-earth policy, murder, forcible expulsion, abduction, loot etc. All the reading and preaching of the philosophies and scriptures of the great religions and the glorification of art and culture, and all development of science is not worth a straw if they fail to imprint on the mind of man the great commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*; *Non-violence is the greatest dharma.* The teaching,

स्त्रिया धनस्य वा प्राप्त्यै साम्राज्यस्यापि वा क्वचित् ।
मनुष्यस्य तु कस्यापि हिंसा कार्या न सर्वथा ॥

शिक्षापत्री—१३

(Violence should never be done to any man in any way for obtaining a woman, or wealth, or even an empire.) has remained a dead letter throughout history except for a handful of individuals. War and daring exploits of bandits and jealous lovers have been glorified and artistically advertised through poetry, fiction, film, drama and newspapers.

Government will no doubt take all precautionary measures for preventing sabotage of railways and similar heinous crimes, and to punish the offenders if they are traced. It might even proclaim drastic laws and impose heavy fines, or promulgate measures similar to those against Criminal Tribes. But they might fail to fully achieve their purpose. For it is easier for a burglar to evade the law and outwit the watchman than for the latter to catch the former before he has committed the crime. In their best form, they are superficial remedies; in their worst form, they become too tyrannical and bring about degeneration of the people living under them, besides placing serious handicaps in the life of many an innocent citizen. The ultimate remedy is to awaken, in the first instance, the moral sense of the rulers and would-be rulers of the people and to create generally a genuine respect for life and abhorrence for violence. This appears to me to be the most important mission for believers in religion and ethics of every denomination of this age.

Wardha, 16-5-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

INTEREST ON MONEY

During Gandhiji's lifetime there came into being various public and charitable institutions either founded by Gandhiji himself or by other national workers who had come under his influence. These institutions carried on activities relating to one or the other item of the constructive programme. Some of these in the course of their work came to own landed properties, capital endowments and/or other moneys, which they did not want to use immediately and so invested in securities, shares, fixed deposits or other loans on interest. Under the terms of some of the donations, the institutions are under an obligation to use only the interest, the corpus being kept intact. Of the rest, they might use capital or interest at their discretion.

The Indian National Congress may also be reckoned among these institutions.

Is it right to maintain institutions, particularly Gandhian ones, on rents and interest accruing on investments? I remember Shri Vinoba in one of his post-prayer speeches disapproved of the practice of investing surplus funds of the Charkha Sangh in banks, securities, etc. There was the possibility, he said, of the invested funds being utilized for purposes contrary to Gandhian ideals and thus defeating the very objectives of the constructive programme.

Since then I have seriously pondered over the ethics of the institution of interest and how it was viewed by the different religious prophets of the world.

It is well-known that Prophet Mohammed had condemned it outright and put his own precept into practice. When an estate devolved upon him from his uncle, he called the debtors together and abandoned his claim to interest and asked them to pay the unpaid balance of the principal amount.

Amongst the Hindus, those that live on interest are treated as *apangteyas* (अपाङ्क्तेयाः) which means that they are unfit to dine on the same table as the elders or *shishtas*, as they are called.

By its very nature, interest is an unearned increment to wealth. The owner of accumulated wealth lends the same to needy persons and charges them interest thereon. The rates of interest often vary with the need or affliction of the debtor. The creditor takes a bond either personal, or secured on properties, movable or immovable, from the debtor and goes to sleep. The interest accrues at simple or compound rate and returns to the owner in plenty. According to an Indian proverb found in various languages, a race-course horse of the finest mettle cannot keep pace with the speed at which interest runs. It runs during the 24 hours of the day, while the steed can only run during a limited period. The steed requires rest but interest does not. The steed has to be maintained while interest requires no maintenance. This formidable instrument in the hands of the creditor has oftentimes brought about the ruin of the debtor. The transference of hundreds of acres of agricultural land to the money-lending class during the British regime is entirely due to the institution of interest.

Both from a strict theoretical point of view and the examination of the practical results achieved during the long course of its history, interest is more a baneful institution than a beneficial one. It does not fit into the framework of *Sarvodaya* where emphasis is laid on bread-labour, self-sufficiency and non-exploitation. These principles apply not only to individuals but also to institutions. For, in the case of the latter, if they are intended to work for the ideals of *Sarvodaya*, they, too, must be expected to work on the same principles of non-exploitation and self-sufficiency, and not depend upon interest for themselves or for their branches or affiliated institutions. Interest decreases the desire as well as the capacity for production both in the creditor and the debtor. In the case of the creditor, it creates a superiority complex and in the case of the debtor, an inferiority complex. The creditor generally looks upon bodily labour with contempt; and the debtor, who cannot subsist except on bodily labour, is ashamed of the same and condemns his fate for this unavoidable infliction. Also a man with nothing but bodily labour to live upon is not favoured by the creditor with a loan, even when he is in dire necessity; for he is afraid that if the debtor does not repay the principal or interest, he would have nothing to go against for recovering the loan. And therefore, the creditor, the chief exploiter, either does not advance him a loan or charges exorbitant rates of interest. The debtor, finding that a major part of his labour will go to satisfy the demands of the creditor, loses incentive in his occupation and becomes indolent; or, if he is a modernized clever man, begins to speculate with funds not of his own, lives an easy life and ultimately looks to the Insolvency Court for relief.

It is also known that banking has become a family institution and generation after generation looks to the earning of interest as an honourable profession. Exploitation is thus handed down from father to son and affects the moral and spiritual development of the succeeding generations also. Central institutions dole out help to subordinate centres which carry on some of the items of the constructive programme. These subordinate centres look to the Central institutions with a sort of mental servility and the Central institutions are likely to develop influence and power which may suppress the soul of the subordinate institutions.

There is no obligation upon the concerns with whom these charitable funds are invested to use them for a purpose consistent with the objects of the Trusts. They may be utilized for carrying on a war or an industry accessary to war, or one opposed to the constructive programme. Is it not a deplorable tragedy that funds donated to the Gandhian institutions, whose object is the furtherance of *ahimsa*, should be devoted through these intermediary bankers for purposes directly contrary to their objects?

It is not only the Gandhian charities that should abandon recourse to interest; all charitable institutions, of whatever type, should also follow the same principle. Charity or benefit to humanity cannot and must not subsist upon a system leading to harmful results to *les miserables*, i.e. unfortunate persons who are condemned to lifelong indebtedness and consequent misery. Charity and exploitation go ill together. Interest is undiluted exploitation in whatever attractive form or colour it may appear. Charity is undiluted benevolence extended to the needy and the afflicted.

The system of interest should be abolished as early as possible. It is as anti-social as gambling and drink. It may be remembered that Governments have made efforts to regulate interest and reduce its burden from time to time in different countries.

I should like to suggest to the authorities administering charitable funds that they should distribute the funds in their hands at present to all deserving beneficiaries. These latter may be required to invest them in constructing buildings for residential or communal purposes connected with their institutions; in the purchase of lands for raising the necessaries of life — food, clothing

and shelter; in the production and propagation of good literature; in the production and distribution of the implements necessary for their agriculture and cottage industries; in the purchase and upkeep of pastures for their cattle and similar other purposes. The trust funds may be utilized for furthering the objects of the Sarva Seva Sangh and the different constituent institutions thereof. The distribution of trust funds as suggested above leads to decentralization even of trust properties.

I desire to remind the readers of these journals and the constructive workers that interest is an offshoot of the system of money economy whose soundness is being questioned by modern economists and the less the dependence upon it, the greater the benefit to individuals and public institutions.

If money-lending for interest is at an end, litigation will dwindle to a considerable extent. If trust funds deny to themselves the custom of interest, the result will be that they will all have to be utilized for direct productive work and in the decrease of unemployment in the villages. If depositing in the banks or with the bankers is continued, it will increase village unemployment and cannot create any real productive work, because, banking generally means circulation of large amounts in a few concerns.

Vinayashrama, 21-4-'50 SITARAMSHASTRI

HISTORY WARNS MODERN MAN

I

Technical Proficiency No Guarantee

Did mankind ever get itself into the sort of jam we are in today? Yes, many times. Modern technology should not confuse us about that.

* * *

..........men have travelled before along the road we are travelling. The same traffic rules regulated them as govern us today. The only difference is this: In earlier ages, men travelled in donkey-carts and on foot. If they sauntered along on the left side of the road, the collisions were not fatal. If we, travelling the same road at eighty miles an hour in our latest cart, break the rules, we will bring about a major disaster.

But the rules have not changed. Neither has the road, although modern man often flatters himself that the gimmicks and gadgets of the industrial world are proofs of his superiority to his forbears.

Technical proficiency is not, in itself, a guarantee of wisdom or survival. Civilizations that in the past became fascinated by their own mechanical skill proved to have taken a step toward suicide. They might later reverse this trend and flourish again — but only if they abandoned their narrow concentration on tools as an end in themselves.

Conditions of Healthy Culture

This is only one application of a lesson that runs through history: Nothing fails like worldly success. My study of twenty-one civilizations has convinced me that cultures are healthy only when they are creative, when they are responding with a fresh, creative response to some challenge of climate or immigration or internal change. The civilization that solves its problems and rests on its oars has a sad future if it does not respond to the next challenge with a different answer.

Worship of the Past — Patriotism

Today we are endangered by our mastery of the machine. We are so bewitched by our own progress in technology that we may neglect the broader creative acts which alone will enable us to survive. Idolatry is one of man's strongest temptations; there is no surer way of drying up the sources of creativity than this worshipping of our own achievements of yesterday. Patriotism is a case in point.

One of the reasons why our times are dangerous is that we have all been taught to worship our nation, our flag, our own past history. Man may safely worship only God; the First Commandment is also the first law of growth for individuals and for societies. When we break it and idolize our past, we fail.

* * *

Patriotism.......... is a modern passion that hardly existed before the French Revolution. In ages when men really worshipped God, they gave the State only such a limited loyalty as we render our city Governments today. They paid their taxes and cast their votes but they did not allow the State to rule their consciences.

Patriotism has become the modern substitute for religion — and a very bad substitute, to my mind. Hitler and Mussolini carried this modern cult to its logical extreme when they declared that the State commanded *all* loyalty of its citizens. Both leaders urged their citizens to idolize national past: Mussolini by equating modern Italy with the Roman Empire; Hitler, by reviving the pagan gods of Valhalla. But all citizens of modern countries share in the error.

The fanatical State-worship which we take for granted today is a peculiarly dangerous form of idolatry. So is our backward-looking belief that science can give the answers to our present problems.

Inadequacy of Science

Our recent scientific progress was a creative answer to the challenge of industrialism, and a fine one. But the problems that we now face are not of a kind that will be answered in the laboratories. They are moral problems — and science is amoral.

The challenge of 1948 is clear: How are we going to employ the physical power our scientists have gained for us? If we try to answer this problem by the old response of piling up more and more scientific knowledge, we shall be heading for a grave disaster. Using an old successful response to meet a new demand is one of man's great temptations, but it rarely succeeds.

The Polynesians excelled as navigators, the Eskimos as fishermen, the Spartans as soldiers, the Nomads as horse-tamers. And in each case, the single skill was always the one on which they depended, even when circumstances called for a fresh and new creative effort. As a result, their cultures did not grow.

Militarism and Materialism

History shows that civilizations which have depended on military prowess to survive have fallen; a soldier's skill will not solve the problems victory brings. Charlemagne, Timur, the Athenian tyrants, the British Plantagenets — all failed because they counted on the one thing they had learned too well — militarism — and thought that it would serve them in *any* circumstances.

Life is not that easy. A single formula for success cannot be written. Every new challenge demands a new, spontaneous response from a man or a society.

But man is lazy. He does not like to think out new solutions when old ones are at hand. That is why it is hard for modern man to give up his hopes of finding a materialist solution to the problems of the world. Concentration on material progress has worked so well in other fields; it has spanned the oceans and harnessed the storm. Surely, says the child of our times, surely it can help us to form One World of friendly, prosperous human beings. But it cannot, in the nature of things. To expect a political solution to be found by the specialists is a dangerous delusion. Man has been very clever in gaining control over nature. But he is very backward in learning to control himself.

Necessity of Spiritual Transformation

If a pat solution to the problems of world unity were possible, we could pay our scholars to find it. But if — as is true — the problem demands a *spiritual* change in modern man, we cannot hand the task over to any civil service class. Each of us has to do the job himself. That is a disconcerting prospect, but it is by a spiritual rebirth that every great civilization has reached maturity.

One of the first things we shall have to learn, if we want this spiritual transformation, is to cease worshipping the pet idols of our-day machinery, our national flag, economics, science itself. The more we have accomplished to date with the help of these man-made devices, the harder it will be for us to outgrow them. The Rich Man has peculiar difficulties in entering into the Kingdom of Heaven in all ages. Those who belong to highly successful nationalities will find it especially difficult to surrender patriotism in order to found a world state.

But there is a precedent for our problem. The Greek city-states in the fourth, third and second centuries B. C. stood in acute need of political federation if they were to survive.

II

Hope for People without History

For hundreds of years the wisest men of Greece tried to find a formula for federation — and failed.

Why? Because of city-pride. The Athenians were too proud of Athens' past to give their loyalty to a larger Greece. And so were the citizens of Corinth and of Sparta. These were all cities with a noble, well-remembered past. While the Greek cities declined as separate powers, the task of federation *was* being accomplished in those centuries with no great difficulty, by the cities of Carthage, Syria, Egypt and Italy in their own areas.

These outpost empires finally hedged in the old Greek cities and eclipsed them. Why? Because the new cities were not handicapped by a history of success. They were able to create the right answer to the problem of their times because they owed no loyalty to other answers worked out in a glorious past. With no famous ancestors to imitate, they were free to create their own solution.

Today, the unification of the world may also be brought about by citizens of countries which have had no proud record in the past few centuries.

If the greater powers stubbornly insist on clinging to the old concept of nationalism — which is out-dated now — people who have not found nationalism a happy experience may be the only ones who can give the world the fresh solution that it needs. I suspect that the coming people in the Americas may be the French-Canadians; and in Asia, the Chinese.

Unification of the World

For the unification of the world must come. And it is desirable, from every viewpoint, that it shall come through peaceful voluntary means.

* * *

Unification through the sword has never in history been a lasting or happy solution.

We must have unity. But it is quite possible that in making One World our *primary* hope, we may fail by aiming too low. For the Brotherhood of Man is, I am convinced, an utterly impossible ideal, unlesss men are bound together by belief in a Transcendent God.

The foundations of our own Western civilization were not laid by men who wanted any such mean thing as economic progress or political union. These things came in the Middle Ages, but as accidental results of their effort to realize the Kingdom of God on earth.

Condition of Modern Women

Certainly, our recent efforts to solve our problems in strictly materialist terms have failed and made caricatures of all our brave plans. We have made 'enormous strides', we say, in the development of labour-saving machinery. And so we have. But one of the odd results of this progress is that women today are overworked as never before. Wives in America can no

longer get household help or afford to devote themselves exclusively to the home. As a result, the woman of today does two jobs: one as wife and mother in the home; one as employee in the office or factory.

During the war in England, this double-working of women was almost universal. And such a trend is not a hopeful one. In history, the ages of disintegration were usually the ages in which women had left the home. In fifth-century Greece, the high point of classical history, women stayed in the home. But after Alexander's time, when the city-states were breaking up, there was a feminist movement like our own.

Attempt of Eliminating God

There have been other tragic surprises from our recent efforts to cure all social ills by a solution that omitted God. The machine age has brought us unprecedented shortages, such as in housing, instead of plenty. It has given us alternate periods of unemployment with manpower shortages, instead of the leisure the name 'labour-saving' suggests.

We have tried allowing the machine to run us, with shocking results. It is now apparent that man's moral decisions are still necessary — even more fatefully necessary — than in simpler ages. Automatic abundance for all through industrialization has not been reached. Perhaps if our intention had been higher, if it had been the practice of Christianity, we should have come much closer to even this practical aim of controlling the machine.

The great decisions of history are always moral. Technical accomplishments can be used either for good or evil; some man must decide which it is to be. In ancient Egypt, the population ingeniously solved the problem of controlling soil and vegetation on the Lower Nile. Great power and prosperity were released, and all the men of Egypt might have been made free. Instead, the rulers chose to use the new prosperity to build self-glorifying Pyramids. They — as we today — can always misuse power.

Moral Choice Imperative

You cannot escape the moral choice: It lies in wait at the end of every path. For each new instrument we conquer intensifies the effects of our virtues and our vices. Every new scientific achievement offers a further test of our spiritual powers.

So do other kinds of technical advance. Once universal education was considered, in itself, the means for realizing peace and progress. But we found that the yellow press came along in England just twenty years after the first batch of children had been taught their letters in the first free schools. It perverted the results of education by popularizing sensational news.

Looking back over the twenty-one civilizations I have studied, I am not sanguine about man's ability to make a good moral decision if he aims only at a worldly goal. Love of mankind has been a force in history — but only when it was a by-product of an intense love of God.

The great need of the modern world is a rebirth of supernatural belief. Without it, man — unregenerate man — is hardly to be trusted with the dangerous toys his laboratories have hatched.

Such a rebirth of Christian values is quite possible. It may come from some of the 'backward' people who have not yet had their moment in their limelight of history and have not, therefore, fallen victims to the pride and self-idolatry which may blind the great Powers.

There is a great, unreleased energy in some of the peoples who have only lately caught the spiritual meaning of the Christian Church: the American Negro, the inmates of the displaced persons camps, the peoples of the under-privileged countries of Africa and Asia. Perhaps these peoples are to be our saviours. It is an historical as well as Biblical truth that 'the meek shall inherit the earth.'

Freedom of Will

But we of the 'Have' nations need not resign ourselves to obliteration. The fact that some earlier civilizations have failed to solve problems similar to ours by no means dooms us to their unhappy fate. We still have freedom of will — as individuals, as societies.

We can still shape our future for good or for evil, for survival or for suicide. If there is one thing of which I, as an historian, am certain, it is this: History never 'happens'. It is brought about by the free decisions of men as they decide whether to be courageous or cowardly in the face of tomorrow.

ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

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